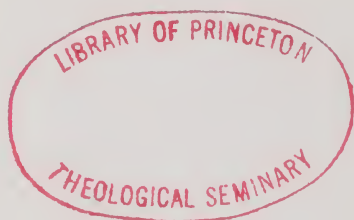


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LETTERS AND OBSERVATIONS

RELATING TO THE

CONTROVERSY

RESPECTING THE

DOCTRINES OF ELIAS HICKS;

CONTAINING

A REVIEW

OF HIS

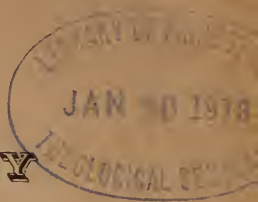
LETTER TO DR. N. SHOEMAKER.

THIRD EDITION—REVISED.

PHILADELPHIA :

PRINTED FOR THE READER.

1824.



NOTE.—*We sincerely regret that circumstances render it necessary to lay the following pages before our readers, but it must be remembered that we have not been the first to resort to the press. Necessity has compelled us into the measure. The publication of Elias Hicks' letter to E. A. Atlee, representing the character of Anna Braithwaite in an unfavourable point of view, and the circulation which has been given to it, render it an act of justice due to her, thus plainly to exhibit the real state of the case.*

INTRODUCTORY REMARKS.

THE subsequent letter from Anna Braithwaite to a friend at Flushing, Long Island, was written, with a view of preserving a clear and correct account, of the conversation which took place between her and Elias Hicks, on the two occasions mentioned; that it might be produced to correct any misrepresentations which should get abroad, after she had quitted our shores.

During the whole of A. B.'s visit to America, she evinced a watchful care, not to become the instrument of circulating or exaggerating reports, which she might hear relative to the differences of opinion that existed among some individuals.

Towards Elias Hicks her whole conduct was certainly that of a friend and a Christian. Instead of forming her opinion of his doctrines, from the representations of others, she waited upon him, and inquired for herself; and it was *his own expressions*, which satisfied her of the pernicious tendency of his principles. She had heard him for herself, not only in private but in his public preaching, and was fully confirmed in the belief, that he denied the truth of what *she considered to be, important and essential* points of Christian faith.

What then became her duty as a gospel minister? To cover up and to conceal these opinions which he had avowed to her, when she knew that he was constantly inculcating the same opinions, in a less open

and forbidding, but more insinuating and dangerous form?

Would she have acted the part of a faithful minister, if she had not warned her fellow-professors of the Christian name, against the adoption of these sentiments, which E. H. was holding up to them as more spiritual and consistent, but which she *conscientiously* believed to be imminently dangerous to the peace and future happiness of their immortal souls? No—she would have been guilty of betraying her Master's cause.

Convinced as she was, most sincerely, that his doctrines were opposed to the spread of vital Christianity, it was her duty to sound the alarm, and solemnly to warn her hearers against the adoption of them. And she did it faithfully.

Elias Hicks charges Anna Braithwaite with "trading his religious character behind his back." This is certainly a *mis-nomer*; for she opposed his *principles* in his presence, where he had every opportunity to deny that he held such principles, had this been the fact. Now, if E. H. calls *this* trading his religious character, it would seem that he *himself* considers his doctrines of such a nature, that, if the Christian world knew that he held them, it would lower his character as a religious man.

Anna Braithwaite did no more than unfold, in their true light, and confute by scripture and sound argument, the sentiments which he had avowed to her; and, for the injury which his religious character has sustained, *his principles are in fault*—not her refutation of them.

Whatever motives may be attributed to A. B. by those who shrink from a full and free investigation

into the opinions of E. H., it is certain, that she acted openly and without disguise. In a select assembly of some hundred persons, of whom E. H. was one, she alluded to the interviews noticed in her letter, and detailed the principal assertions of E. H. as she has put them down on paper; and he had full liberty to deny, if he thought proper; which, however, he did not.

During her stay in New York for several weeks previous to her embarkation, E. H. had every opportunity, if he had chosen, to come forward and to disclaim what *he knew* she had asserted, in his presence, to be *his doctrine*; and further, she evinced a desire to meet him, and caused a message to this effect to be delivered to him; but he neither came forward to meet her, nor publicly denied the correctness of her assertions, until after she had *left America*, to return to her family and friends.

LETTERS, &c.

Extract of a letter from Anna Braithwaite, to a friend at Flushing, on Long Island.

THE first conversation had with E. H. by A. B., was after the quarterly meeting of Ministers and Elders—Dined at his house. After expressing his great unity with her, he seemed to think she wanted nothing but further experience to enlarge her views, and make them more correct.

He spoke on the subject of the Scriptures as being much too highly thought of among Friends, elucidating his views by saying, that a master was useful in teaching the rules of arithmetic, but when we had learned them, he was no longer needful to us; therefore, when we come to the Spirit, to which the Scriptures direct, we had no longer need of them. Indeed, he thought that since the Comforter, or Spirit of Truth, had come into every heart, we should be better without them; and that children brought up to pay attention to the Spirit, would have all revealed to them which the Scriptures contain, that was needful for them, without the perusal of them. Even with regard to the creation of the world, it would be better left to the revelation of the Word, than to any outward means of information: and he strongly recommended her disuse of the Scriptures, stating, that *he* only referred to them in his communications on account of the low state of the times, the people being

still attached to the letter. But his opinion was, that both A. B. and himself would preach the gospel better without reference to the Scriptures in any way, as he believed the Bible had done more harm than any other book ever published; and that, if we supposed it a great advantage to have the Bible, we must suppose the Almighty very unjust to leave so large a portion of the human species without it. [The foregoing is the substance of the first conversation, omitting strong expressions of E. H. of disapprobation of Bible societies, not thought needful to note.]

When at Jericho, in the third month, A. B. took tea with E. H. in a social way. She had not long been in the house, when he began to speak on the subject of the Trinity, which A. B. considers a word so grossly abused, as to render it undesirable ever to make use of it. E. H. spoke much of the impossibility of believing what we could not comprehend; and also on the propriety of bringing even Scripture truths to the test of the Spirit in our own hearts, and rejecting all such parts as we do not see to be consistent with the attributes of the Almighty; stating, that from reading various works he was convinced not only that our English translation of the Bible was in many parts erroneous, but also that the gospels handed to us were no more authentic than many other writings that we have not received; and that they have been greatly contaminated by coming through the medium of popes, who were anxious to favour their own views. Indeed, he said it was not needful for us to believe more than a small part of what was contained in the Scriptures, and that he conceived the writings of Confucius, and many others of the philosophers, were equally of divine revelation

with the Scriptures. That the heathen nations, the Mahometans, Chinese, Indians, &c. bore greater evidence of the influence of divine light than professing Christians. E. H. also asked A. B. if she could be so ignorant as to believe in the account of the creation of the world, as given in the Scriptures: that he had been convinced for the last ten years, that it was nothing but an allegory: that this had been specially revealed to his mind in a meeting in Liberty street, about that time. He asked A. B. if she thought Adam was any worse after he had eaten the forbidden fruit than before, saying he did not believe he was. He also asked her if she conceived we were born into the world in any different condition from Adam when he was first created; stating, that to suppose we had any propensities to evil, was to suppose the Almighty created evil, and that he believed all our propensities were good: it was the excessive indulgence of them that made them evil. He spoke much of the absurdity of believing in any outward sacrifice for sin: that it was the same Spirit that was in us that was in Christ, which was the alone means of redemption and salvation: that he believed it to be from the Spirit that he was convinced that Jesus Christ was no more than a prophet, who was faithful to the gift that was in him, and which was conferred at the time the Spirit descended upon him like a dove, when he was undergoing the ceremony of outward baptism.

E. H. said if A. B. would attentively read the Scriptures, she would believe Jesus to be the son of Joseph, and quoted many texts to convince her of it. He asked her whether she could suppose the Almighty to be so cruel as to suffer Jesus Christ to die for our sakes. He appealed to her as a mother, stating how

cruel it would be for her to suffer one of her children to die for the dearest friend she had in the world: that Jesus died in support of his testimony as any other martyr had died, and that his death was no more to us than the death of any other martyr: that he died through the persecution of the Jews, not willingly, but because he could not help it. On being told it was the fulness of the Godhead that was in Christ, and a measure of the Spirit that was in us, E. H. asserted that the fulness of the Godhead is in us, and in every blade of grass; and he often expressed his belief that if we attended to the Spirit, every thing relating to the dealings of the Almighty would be revealed to us individually, so that we could comprehend every thing ourselves. That he thought there was no other test for our society to be governed by, but the test of the Spirit, without any reference to the revealed will of God, as contained in the Scriptures. On being asked how it should be that the Spirit should in his mind, directly oppose the leading doctrines of our society, founded upon Christian testimony, and upon the revelation of the Lord's power in the hearts of our early Friends, and how it could be that in A. B.'s mind its openings had been in uniform accordance with these, and who must decide between them? he said he did not know, but he should like to live to see the day when our discipline should be extended to nothing further than immoral conduct: that he thought matters of faith should never come under its cognizance; and he hoped Friends would let him alone as long as he lived.

On being asked what would become of the society if one minister stated one thing, and another something directly opposite, all asserting divine inspira-

tion, he said he should like to see it tried. On the very subject of the miraculous birth of our Saviour, Ann Shipley, who was with me, and who will bear witness to all the above statements, mentioned to me that, some years ago, in a religious meeting, she heard E. H. most beautifully allude to his full belief in our Saviour's being the Son of the Virgin Mary, and he entered into some instructive illustrations on the subject.

Can the Spirit of the Lord be opposed to itself in its operations on the mind?

ANNA BRAITHWAITE.

New York, 7th mo. 16th, 1824.



The following is the substance of Anna Braithwaite's remarks in reply to the assertions of Elias Hicks.

In regard to believing what we cannot comprehend, A. B. asked him, if he could comprehend how the grass grew: that, perhaps, he could define it to a certain extent, and had the evidence of the process to his outward senses, so as to remove all doubts of the fact that the grass *does grow*; but beyond *that*, there was a creative power, a mystery that human wisdom could not fathom; and if this was the case with regard to the works of the outward creation, how much more must it be the case with regard to things of a spiritual nature? that it was transgressing our bounds as finite created beings, to judge of the ways of Omnipotence; that his ways were higher than our ways, and his thoughts than our thoughts; that it

was not for us to say what was consistent with his attributes, and what was not consistent with them, but to bow to his holy will in what he is pleased to do in and for us; that, as to the authenticity of the Scriptures, if we take them upon the ground of evidence, and lose sight of the wish to comprehend the *why* and the *wherefore* of the Lord's dealings, further than as they may be unfolded to us, we shall find a greater mass of external evidence of their authenticity, than of any other book that was ever written in the world. She recommended to Elias Hicks, that as he had read works stating objections to the English translations, and insinuating that pernicious effects had been produced by the channels through which our gospels had come to us, to peruse some of the various authors who have so ably replied to all these objections. That the Scriptures containing the history of our first parents, their disobedience, their fall in consequence of it, the account of the Lord's dealings with his people Israel, of the Mosaic dispensation, of the types and figures pointing in so conspicuous a manner to the advent of the Messiah, and to the glorious offering for sin upon Calvary's Mount; containing, also, the prophecies and experience of the dedicated servants of the Most High; followed by the New Testament, where these prophecies are so memorably fulfilled, as relates to the fulness of times, when the promised Saviour, the Redeemer, the Word which was from the beginning, came among men in that prepared body born of the Virgin Mary, and taking upon himself the form of a servant, was, in all respects, tempted as we are, yet without sin; containing, also, most ample testimony to the divinity of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ; bears such evi-

dent marks of divine inspiration, as to leave no doubt of its having been under divine appointment, that the revelation of the will of Almighty God, as contained in them, should be profitable for doctrine, &c. Then, as regards the internal evidence, he that believeth hath the witness in himself; and that the state of the true believer is one of progressive growth; yet when the language can only be in sincerity of soul uttered, "help thou mine unbelief," such an one will ever be preserved from denying what he may not yet be initiated into a belief of; and as he advances he will find that the Spirit of Christ in him, will ever acknowledge to the revelation of the divine will in the sacred writings; and that it is well for us to remember, that in Christ dwelt all the fulness of the Godhead bodily, and that in us it is a *measure* of the same Spirit: that to say his divinity consists only in the gift that was in him and in his faithfulness to it, is to make him on a level with ourselves. With regard to his death for our sakes, what can be said that is not said in the Scriptures, both before and after this wonderful display of mercy to the children of men, to prove that it was a free-will offering for the sins of the world?

In reference to the account of the creation of the world being an allegory, A. B. stated her opinion that although the spiritual application of Scripture facts might sometimes be instructive, yet she conceived it dangerous in any degree to undermine a belief in the plain historical narration of facts as having really taken place.

With regard to Adam, she fully believed him to be in a very different condition, after he had transgressed the command of the Almighty, from what he

was in before: that the writings of our early friends, R. Barclay, &c. clearly bear their testimony to the fall of Adam from the state in which he was first created: that A. B.'s views on the subject entirely corresponded with R. B.'s statement of it. She told E. H. he must be aware that there was a great deal of evil in the world, and that if we had not propensities to evil, it is more than probable that a preponderance of good would appear. That A. B. from her own experience, and from every observation she had been enabled to make on the human mind, was fully convinced that we have evil propensities; and that it is only through obedience to the glorious means of restoration, through the coming of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, that we know an overcoming of evil.

With regard to all being revealed to us, without the Scripture, A. B. stated her very decided opinion, that it was presumptuous to cherish such an idea. Through unutterable mercy, the grace of God has appeared unto all men; yet facts daily prove to us, that even the most watchful, find that it is for them to accept, with humble thankfulness, the intimations afforded, and that immediate revelation is not at their command. That as the Scriptures do so amply contain the above mentioned chain of sublime truths, should we neglect the means put within our reach, of instruction from them, we must indeed be blind to our condition to expect, that this sublime chain of events, would be revealed to us during such neglect. With regard to those nations who have not the Scriptures, we fully believe, that as Christ died for all men, so the grace and truth which came by him, doth appear unto all men—yet we see, and do hear facts continu-

ally, proving that where the Scriptures are unknown, evident proofs of darkness do exist; and that it is the want of authentic information on the subject, which can make any one suppose that the Chinese, Indians, &c. evince stronger marks of gospel light in their conduct, than professing Christians; and if we take what is called the Christian world, we shall uniformly find, that superstition on the one hand, and infidelity on the other, have opposed the reading of the Scriptures; and that under the Divine blessing, the perusal of them has seemed conspicuously to have enlightened the minds of all those, who have been instrumental to religious reform. She stated also, that she thought we could not do better, than leave all those nations whose disadvantages were no doubt weighed in the balance of the sanctuary, to the attribute of Divine mercy, remembering the parable, that he who knew not the Lord's will, and did things worthy of stripes, was to be beaten with few stripes—but what would become of us, if in trying to bring ourselves upon a level with them, we should prove to be of those who might have known the Lord's will, and may deserve to be beaten with many stripes?

A. B. stated the confusion that would ensue in any religious society, if the ministers of that society were not cognizable to it for the doctrines they might preach. That as she fully believed the Scriptures to be given forth by the Spirit, and to direct to it, so she considered the Spirit might be said to be the cause, and the Scriptures the effect. That as they are the effect, if we really witness the operation of the same Spirit in our own hearts, there will be a correspondence, like face answering to face in a glass, and we shall never be afraid of trying the cause by the effect

produced. That our fundamental doctrine of a belief in the guidance of the Spirit of Christ, should never screen us from the necessity of trying the spirits; and that it is not possible that it can be the same Spirit which in one individual gives living faith in the doctrines of the gospel, and in another contradicts them.

That our early Friends, gathered out of the forms and ceremonies of religion, by the power of Truth operating upon their hearts and understandings, were brought into the obedience of Christ—they knew his voice within them, and they acknowledged, under its influence, to all he had done for them. Their writings bear ample testimony to this. A society founded upon such principles, so long as its ministers are baptized by the One Spirit, into the Body of which Jesus Christ is the Holy Head and High Priest, will be likely to be bound together in the fellowship of the gospel—but when under the profession of the guidance of the Spirit, such sacred truths as the miraculous birth and death of our Saviour, for our sakes, are denied; then such a departure from the soundness of the Faith, would be watched over, as a fond parent would watch over a diseased limb in a child; and lest the wound should spread, and the vital functions should become injured, true affection would lead the parent to consent to the amputation of the limb, that the life of the child might be spared; so would gospel love lead the living members of the church, after using every means in their power to restore such a minister, to remove him from the body of the Society, lest it also should become diseased.

That no society could exist, so as to know the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace, if its ministers did not all eat the same spiritual meat, and drink

the same spiritual drink, having faith in God, and in Jesus Christ whom he hath sent, proving their faith by their works; and the work of the ministry is one of the most important tests by which living faith can be proved. A. B. stated in the course of her communications, that she knew herself to be but a child in experience, yet in that love which casts out fear, she believed it her duty to speak the truth in boldness to one whom she desired to entreat as a father. E. H. repeatedly told her, that it was want of experience which prevented her views being similar to his—that he thought light was progressing, and that we need not recur either to our early Friends, or to the Scriptures, in these days. A. B. thought, that whenever any newer gospel should be preached than that of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, which she believed would never be the case, such corroborating testimonies would be afforded, as conspicuously attended the ushering in of the new covenant dispensation. She asked E. H. what greater enlargement he could desire, than attended the apostle Paul after his memorable conversion; when all his faculties, under the sanctifying power of Divine Grace, were so eminently enlarged and directed to the allotted field of labour, he was introduced into. A. B.

The foregoing comprehends the views held out by A. B. though they may not be the exact words, nor nearly the whole of what she had to say to E. H.

The first conversation occurred at E. H.'s 1st mo. 21st, 1824; the second in the 3d month following. Ann Shipley was her companion, and was present at each time.

Copy of a letter from Elias Hicks to Dr. Edwin A. Atlee, of Philadelphia, relative to the foregoing documents.

Jericho, 9th mo. 27th, 1824.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

Thy very acceptable letter of the 29th ultimo came duly to hand, and I have taken my pen not only to acknowledge thy kindness, but also to state to thee the unfriendly and unchristian conduct of A. Braithwaite towards me, not only as relates to that extract, but in her conversation among Friends and others, traducing my religious character, and saying I held and promulgated infidel doctrines, &c.—endeavouring to prejudice the minds of Friends against me, behind my back, in open violation of gospel order. She came to my house, as stated in the extract thou sent me, after the quarterly meeting of ministers and elders at Westbury in first month last. At that meeting was the first time I saw her, which was about five or six months after her arrival in New York. And as I had heard her well spoken of as a minister, I could have had no preconceived opinion of her but what was favourable, therefore, I treated her with all the cordiality and friendship I was capable of. She also, from all outward appearance, manifested the same; and after dinner, she requested, in company with A. S., a female Friend that was with her, a private opportunity with me. So we withdrew into another room, where we continued in conversation for near two hours. And being innocent and ignorant of any cause that I had given, on my part, for the necessity of such an opportunity, I concluded she

had nothing more in view than to have a little free conversation on the state of those select meetings.

But, to my surprise, the first subject she spoke upon, was to call in question a sentiment I had expressed in the meeting aforesaid, which appeared to me to be so plain and simple, that I concluded the weakest member in our society, endued with a rational understanding, would have seen the propriety of. It was a remark I made on the absence of three out of four of the representatives appointed by one of the preparative meetings to attend the quarterly meeting. And I having long been of the opinion, that much weakness had been introduced into our society by injudicious appointments, I have often been concerned to caution Friends on that account. The remark I made was this: that I thought there was something wrong in the present instance—for, as we profess to believe in the guidance of the Spirit of Truth as an unerring Spirit, was it not reasonable to expect, especially in a meeting of ministers and elders, that if each friend attended to their proper gift, as this Spirit is endued with prescience, that it would be much more likely, under its divine influence, we should be led to appoint such as would attend on a particular and necessary occasion, than to appoint those who would not attend?

This idea, she contended, was not correct; and the sentiments she expressed on this subject really affected me. To think that any, professing to be a gospel minister, called from a distant land to teach others, and to be so deficient in knowledge and experience, in so plain a case, that I could not well help saying to her, that her views were the result of a want of religious experience, and that I believed if

she improved her talent faithfully, she would be brought to see better, and acknowledge the correctness of my position. But she replied, she did not want to see better. This manifestation of her self-importance, lowered her character, as a gospel minister, very much in my view; and her subsequent conduct, while she was with us, abundantly corroborated and confirmed this view concerning her. As to her charge against me, in regard to the Scriptures, it is generally incorrect, and some of it false. And it is very extraordinary, that she should manifest so much seeming friendship for me, when present, and in my absence, speak against me in such an unbecoming manner. Indeed, her conduct towards me, often reminds me of the treachery of Judas, when he betrayed his master with a kiss. And, instead of acting towards me as a friend or a Christian, she had been watching for evil.

As to my asserting that I believed the Scriptures were held in too high estimation by the professors of Christianity in general, I readily admit, as I have asserted it in my public communications for more than forty years, but, generally, in opposition to those that held them to be the only rule of faith and practice; and my views have always been in accordance with our primitive Friends on this point. And at divers times, when in conversation with hireling teachers, (and at other times) I have given it as my opinion, that so long as they held the Scriptures to be the only rule of faith and practice, and by which they justify wars, hireling ministry, predestination, and what they call the ordinances, viz: water baptism and the pass-over supper, mere relics of the Jewish law, so long the Scriptures did such, more harm than good; but

that the fault was not in the Scriptures, but in their literal and carnal interpretation of them—and that would always be the case until they came to the Spirit that gave them forth, as no other power could break the seal, and open them rightly to us. Hence I have observed, in my public communications, and in conversation with the members of different denominations, and others, who held that the Scriptures are the primary and only rule of faith and practice—that, according to the true analogy of reasoning, “that for which a thing is such, the thing itself is more such”—as the Spirit was before the Scriptures, and above them, and without the Spirit they could not have been written or known. And with this simple but conclusive argument, I have convinced divers of the soundness of our doctrine in this respect—that not the Scriptures but the Spirit of Truth, which Jesus commanded his disciples to wait for, as their only rule, that would teach them all things, and guide them into all truth, is the primary and only rule of faith and practice, and is the only means by which our salvation is effected.

The extract contains so much inconsistency, and is so incorrect, that, as I proceed, it appears less and less worthy of a reply, and yet it does contain some truth. I admit that I did assert, and have long done it, that we cannot believe what we do not understand. This the Scripture affirms, Deut. xxix. 29—“The secret things belong unto the Lord our God, but the things that are revealed belong unto us and our children for ever, that we may do all the words of this law”—and all that is not revealed, is to us the same as a nonentity, and will for ever remain so, until it is revealed; and that which is revealed, enables us, agreeably to the

apostle's exhortation, to give a reason of the hope that is in us, to honest inquirers. I also assert, that we ought to bring all doctrines, whether written or verbal, to the test of the Spirit of Truth in our own minds, as the only sure director relative to the things of God; otherwise, why is a manifestation of the Spirit given to every man, if it is not to profit by; and, if the Scriptures are above the Spirit, and a more certain test of doctrines, why is the Spirit given, seeing it is useless? But this doctrine, that the Scriptures are the only rule of faith and practice, is a fundamental error, and is manifested to be so by the Scriptures themselves, and also by our primitive Friends' writings. It would seem that A. B. has strained every nerve in exaggerating my words, for I have not said more than R. Barclay, and many others of our predecessors, respecting the errors in our English translation of the Bible. Hence it appears, that she was *determined to criminate me at all events*, by striving to make me erroneous for saying that the Gospel handed to us, was no more authentic than many other writings. Surely a person that did not assent to this, must be ignorant indeed.

Are not the writings of our primitive Friends as authentic as any book or writing, and especially such as were written so many centuries ago, the originals of which have been lost many hundred years? and are not the histories of passing events, written by candid men of the present age, which thousands know to be true, as authentic as the Bible?

Her assertions, that I asked her if she could be so ignorant as to believe in the account of the creation of the world, and that I had been convinced for the last ten years, that it was only an allegory; and that

it had been especially revealed to me at a meeting in Liberty-street about that time; that I asked her if she thought Adam was any worse after he had eaten the forbidden fruit than before, and that I said I did not believe he was; and also her asserting, that I said that Jesus Christ was no more than a prophet; and that I further said, that if she would read the Scriptures attentively she would believe that Jesus was the son of Joseph: these assertions of hers, are all false and unfounded, and must be the result of a feigned or forced construction of something I might have said, to suit her own purpose. For those who do not wish to be satisfied with fair reasoning, there is no end to their cavilling and misrepresentation. As to what she relates as it regards the manner of our coming into the world in our infant state, it is my belief, that we come into the world in the same state of innocence, and endowed with the same propensities and desires that our first parents were, in their primeval state; and this Jesus Christ has established, and must be conclusive in the minds of all true believers; when he took a little child in his arms and blessed him, and said to them around him, that except they were converted, and became as that little child, they should in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven. Of course, all the desires and propensities of that little child, and of our first parents in their primeval state, must have been good, as they were all the endowments of their Creator, and given to them for a special and useful purpose. But it is the improper and unlawful indulgence of them that is evil.

I readily acknowledge, I have not been able to see or understand, how the cruel persecution and crucifixion of Jesus Christ, by the wicked and hard-heart-

ed Jews, should expiate my sins; and I never have known any thing to effect that for me, but the grace of God, that taught me, agreeably to the apostle's doctrine, to deny all ungodliness and the world's lusts, and to live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world; and as I have faithfully abode under its teachings, in full obedience thereto, I have been brought to believe that my sins were forgiven, and I permitted to sit under the Lord's teaching, as saith the prophet: "that the children of the Lord are all taught of the Lord, and in righteousness they are established, and great is the peace of his children." And so long as I feel this peace, there is nothing in this world that makes me afraid, as it respects my eternal condition. But if any of my friends have received any known benefit from any outward sacrifice, I do not envy them their privilege. But, surely, they would not be willing that I should acknowledge as a truth, that which *I have no kind of knowledge of*. I am willing to admit, that Divine Mercy is no doubt watching over his rational creation for their good, and may secretly work at times for their preservation; but, if, in his infinite wisdom and goodness, he sees meet to hide it from us, as most consistent with his wisdom and our good, let us have a care that we do not, in the pride of our hearts, undertake to pry into his secret counsels, lest we offend; but be content with what he is pleased to reveal to us, let it be more or less, and, especially, if he is pleased to speak peace to our minds. And when he graciously condescends to do this, we shall know it to be a peace that the world cannot give, with all its enjoyments, neither take away, with all its frowns.

I shall now draw to a close, and, with the saluta-

tion of gospel love, I subscribe myself thy affectionate and sympathizing friend and brother,

ELIAS HICKS.

TO EDWIN A. ATLEE.

REMARKS.

In perusing the preceding correspondence, we have been forcibly struck with the *spirit* in which the letter of Elias Hicks to Edwin A. Atlee, appears to be written.

Let any person calmly and dispassionately read it and the statement of Anna Braithwaite, which it is designed to refute, and then seriously say, whether the language which E. H. uses, in speaking of Anna Braithwaite, comports with the meekness and gentleness of a gospel minister.

Does it correspond with that "*gospel love*" to which he alludes in the concluding paragraph of the letter, or with that *readiness to forgive*, which is so strongly inculcated in the precepts of Christ?

Even if we could admit the assertions of A. B. to be incorrect, it must be granted, we think, by all, that she has expressed herself in respectful and becoming language.

The letter of E. H. is generally vague and inconclusive, and appears to meet the statement of A. B. in *but few* points, and most of those it admits to be correct. He digresses into the discussion of irrelevant subjects, as if to divert our attention from the main object; the greater part of it being taken up in treating upon matters which are in no way connected with the controversy.

Anna Braithwaite has not said, in any part of her letter, that Elias Hicks “asserted that the Scriptures were held in too high estimation *among the professors of Christianity generally*”—her words are, “He spoke on the subject of the Scriptures, as being much too highly thought of *amongst Friends*.”

Hence, it is clear, that although E. H. says much on the subject of the Scriptures, he has not answered the assertion of A. B. but has contended against something entirely foreign to the subject under discussion; and although he asserts that “his views on this point have always been in accordance with our primitive Friends,” it is obvious that by “this point,” he alludes merely to “the Scriptures being held in too estimation by those who consider them as the only rule of faith and practice;” a subject which A. B. has not once mentioned.

He further says, the assertion “that the Scriptures were held in too high estimation” was “*generally* made in opposition to such as held them to be the only rule of faith and practice”—hence it follows, that he has made the assertion at other times, in opposition to those who do *not hold* them to be the only rule of faith and practice, for the word “generally” will admit of many exceptions.

Elias Hicks, in his letter to E. A. Atlee, as well as more pointedly and at large, in the subsequent one to Dr. N. Shoemaker, rejects the doctrine of the atonement. In the latter we find the following assertion: “But I do not consider that the crucifixion of the outward body of flesh and blood of Jesus, on the cross, was an atonement for any sins but the legal sins of the Jews.” We would simply wish this doc-

trine to be compared with the following passages of Scripture :

“ For it pleased the Father that in him, (Christ,) should all fulness dwell. And having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile *all things* unto himself. By him, I say, whether they be things in earth or things in heaven. And you that were sometime alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled in the *body of his flesh*, through *death*, to present you holy and unblameable, and unproveable in his sight.” *Paul to the Colossians, Chap. i. 19, 20, 21, 22.*

“ And I lay down my life for my sheep, therefore *doth my Father love me because I lay down my life* that I might take it again. *No man taketh it from me*; but I lay it down of myself. *I have power to lay it down*, and I have power to take it again. *This commandment have I received of my Father.*” *John, Chap. x. 15. 17, 18.*

These and many others which might be quoted, such as “Ye are bought with a price”—“Christ died for our sins *according to the Scripture*”—“by the which will ye are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all,” *Paul*—“Forasmuch then as Christ has suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves,” &c. *Peter*—“Jesus Christ the righteous—He is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but for the sins of the whole world,” *John*—conclusively prove Jesus Christ to be the Redeemer of the *whole world*. Indeed, if we strike from the pages of holy writ those parts which inculcate this prominent feature in the system of *Gospel Redemption*, we shall leave but a small portion of several of the books of the sacred volume.

Now who can believe but that the statement of A. B. on the subject of the Scriptures is true ?

The whole of E. H's observations and reasoning upon the superiority of the Spirit over the Scriptures, and the appointment of representatives to the quarterly meeting, are entirely foreign to the subject of Anna Braithwaite's letter; they are not noticed in it.

E. H. says, " I also assert that we ought to bring all *doctrines*, whether written or verbal, to the test of the Spirit of Truth in our own minds, as the only sure director relative to the things of God; otherwise why is a manifestation of the Spirit given to every man, if it is not to profit by? And if the Scriptures are above the Spirit, and a more certain test of doctrines, why is the Spirit given, seeing it is useless?"

From these expressions it would appear as though the *only* purpose for which the manifestation of the Spirit is given, is to be a *test* of *doctrines*; and that if we do not make it the supreme judge in this point, it is of no use at all.

We can readily believe that the Spirit of Truth would prove an invaluable blessing to man, as a guide in the practical duties of Christianity, were it considered to be no test of doctrine at all. But on this point we shall quote Robert Barclay's Apology, which has long been recognized as the standard doctrinal work of the Society of Friends :

" We do look upon them (the Scriptures,) as the only fit outward judge of controversies among Christians; and that whatsoever doctrine is contrary unto their testimony, may therefore justly be rejected as false. And for our parts, we are very willing that all our doctrines and practices be tried by them; which we never refused, nor ever shall, in all controversies

with our adversaries, as the judge and test. We shall also be very willing to admit it as a positive certain maxim, that whatsoever any do, pretending to the Spirit, which is contrary to the Scriptures, be accounted and reckoned a delusion of the devil."

After enumerating several assertions of A. B.'s, E. H. says, "These assertions of her's are all false and unfounded, and must be the result of a feigned or forced construction of something *I might have said, to suit her own purpose.*"

Had E. H. informed us what it was he "might have said," (or as we suppose he means *did say*) we could have judged for ourselves, whether all "these assertions of her's are false and unfounded;" and after admitting fully, as he has done, in this letter, that we cannot believe what we do not understand, that the Scriptures are no test of doctrine, and that the atonement of our blessed Redeemer is of no avail in the salvation of man, his denial of the points above alluded to, must certainly be considered as making very little in support of his cause.

The subjoined letter from Ann Shipley, was written, we are informed, without any solicitation on the part of the individual to whom it is addressed, and has been printed in New York. It furnishes a *full and decided confirmation of the truth of Anna Braithwaite's statement*, and is supported by the testimony of another respectable individual, who was present during a part or the whole of the second conversation. He has been seen, we understand, on the occasion, and asserts that part of A. B.'s statement which rehearses the conversation that took place while he was present, *to be correct.*

It is but proper to mention, that all the letters are

published without the knowledge or consent of the writers.

—◆—

Letter of Ann Shipley.

New York, 10th mo. 15th, 1824.

DEAR FRIEND,

It has been with feelings of extreme regret and astonishment that I have read two pamphlets published in your city, entitled "Misrepresentations of A. Braithwaite, &c."

It is not my desire to discuss or widen the controversy which unhappily exists respecting the sentiments of those who are thus placed before the public as the accusers of our dear friend Anna Braithwaite; but it has become in my mind a serious question whether I ought to permit the character of an absent friend, whose distance from her accusers prevents her from vindicating herself against the gross aspersions so illiberally cast upon her, without endeavouring to do all in my power to avert the arrows of calumny and persecution with which she has been so cruelly assailed, but which, as relates to her own innocence, and a consciousness of having faithfully discharged what she believed to be her religious duty, will, I trust, fall harmlessly at her feet.

After deliberately weighing the subject, and the very unpleasant and painful considerations associated with it, duty to my absent friend, respect to my own character, and above all, a regard for the cause of truth, obliges me to assure thee, and all A. Braithwaite's friends, that I was present during the conversations between her and Elias Hicks. The statement

she left was correct. The subject of the forbidden fruit was mentioned, but I have not a perfect recollection of the terms made use of, and never have, at any time, given a different account respecting it, although the contrary has been reported.

I believe her visit to him was with sincere desires that she might be enabled to convince him of what she thought to be his errors, and from feelings of love and good will towards him.

I also believe when A. Braithwaite left that statement, she had no desire to have it circulated in the manner it has been done, but with a view that should any erroneous representations take place respecting the conversations, that an accurate account of them might be produced to prevent trouble.

It may appear to some very extraordinary, that I should thus express myself in direct contradiction to Elias Hicks; and my dear friend, thou mayest be assured that nothing but a sense of duty, the peculiarities of the case, and the entire conviction of mind of the correctness of A. Braithwaite's statement, would ever induce me to do so.

Signed,

ANN SHIPLEY.



In order to show that the statement of Anna Braithwaite can be fully and firmly supported; and that the sentiments which she attributes to Elias Hicks are by no means new to him, we subjoin the following documents, which are but a part of the testimony which might be adduced, all corroborating her account in the most plain and positive manner.

Statement of Joseph Whitall.

Having attended the last yearly meeting at New York, I heard Elias Hicks declare, in public testimony, in a large meeting, at the North House, "The same power that made Christ a Christian must make us Christians, and the same power that saved him must save us." Being very uneasy with the doctrine, I took a private opportunity to state to him my uneasiness. I informed him, that, for several years, reports had been in circulation unfavourable towards him, and that on these occasions I had vindicated his character, from a belief that he must have been misunderstood, until last fall I met with a piece in writing, said to be from his pen, in which he called Christ the Jewish Messiah; that he was alone the Saviour of the Jews; and that he was not the Son of God until after the baptism of John, and the descent of the Holy Ghost. To this I offered my objections as unscriptural, *but he justified them.* He also declared that he considered it a matter of the greatest encouragement to believe that Christ was no more than a man, for if he were any thing more it would destroy the effect of his example *to him.* He admitted that he had not, till of latter time, held up the doctrine that Christ was liable to fall like other men. When I quoted the testimony of John, that the Word was made or took of flesh, he said it was impossible. I offered my sentiments, that, if he persisted in preaching these doctrines, so contrary to the Scriptures, and the testimonies of our ancient Friends, it would produce one of the greatest schisms that had ever happened. He allowed it would pro-

duce a schism, but that it would soon be over, for *he believed his doctrines* must and would prevail. Seeing that we differed so widely in sentiment on these points, I proposed to him to have a few solid Friends, ministers and elders, convened, that a discussion might be had; but he would not consent thereto, saying, that he was so confirmed in his sentiments, that he would persevere therein let the consequences be what they might.

JOSEPH WHITALL.

12 mo. 12th, 1822.

E. Hicks, in a letter dated 12 mo. 21st, 1822, speaking of this statement, says, "As these charges are not *literally true*, being founded on his (J. W.'s,) own forced and improper construction of my words, I deny them," &c.

Here it is important to observe, that the language used by E. H. is similar to that in which he denies some few points in the statement of A. Braithwaite, though in the case of J. W. he goes no further than to say that they are not *literally true*; an assertion which does not in the smallest degree affect their *substantial truth*.

If Elias Hicks really believes that he has cause to complain of a feigned, or forced, or improper construction being put upon his words, why does he not come out and tell what he *did say*, and leave the world to judge how far his meaning has been perverted by a feigned, or forced, or improper construction of his language?

The fact is, there is neither *construction* nor *comment*, but a *simple statement of his own words*; and although he thus speaks of the statement of Joseph

Whitall, yet he did fully admit it to be *substantially true*, in a conference which J. W. afterwards had with him on the subject, as is expressed in a letter from J. W. dated 2nd mo. 18th, 1823, viz.

“I thought it proper when he (E. H.) was in our neighbourhood, to call upon him for an explanation, which he was free to give, and which *fully confirmed* every sentiment which I had entertained concerning his new doctrines. He did not hesitate to admit every thing which I had stated as his doctrine, with one small exception scarcely worth naming.”

This exception was simply this: E. Hicks said, that instead of stating to J. W. that Christ was no more than a *man*, he said he was no more than an *Israelite*.



We shall now lay before our readers the following letter, written by Elias Hicks to a respectable physician of this city, which will be found to corroborate the sentiments which he has avowed in the hearing of these Friends.

Letter from Elias Hicks to Dr. N. Shoemaker, of Philadelphia.

Jericho, 3d mo. 31st, 1823.

DEAR FRIEND,

Thy acceptable letter of 1st month last, came duly to hand, but my religious engagements, and other necessary concerns, have prevented my giving it that attention that its contents seem to demand. Thou queries after my views of the suffering of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, and what was the object of

the shedding of his blood on the cross, and what benefits resulted to mankind by the shedding of this blood, &c. I shall answer in a very simple way, as I consider the whole subject to be a very simple one, as all truth is simple when we free ourselves from the improper bias of tradition and education, which rests as a burthensome stone on the minds of most of the children of men, and which very much mars the unity and harmony of society.

1st. By what means did Jesus suffer? The answer is plain, by the hands of wicked men, and because his works were righteous and theirs were wicked. Query. Did God send him into the world purposely to suffer death by the hands of wicked men? By no means; but to live a righteous and godly life, (which was the design and end of God's creating man in the beginning,) and thereby be a perfect example to such of mankind as should come to the knowledge of him and of his perfect life. For, if it was the purpose and will of God that he should die by the hands of wicked men, then the Jews, by crucifying him, would have done God's will, and of course would all have stood justified in his sight, which could not be. But it was permitted so to be, as it had been with many of the prophets and wise and good men that were before him, who suffered death by the hands of wicked men for righteousness sake, as ensamples to those that came after, that they should account nothing too dear to give up for the truth's sake, not even their own lives.

But the shedding of his blood by the wicked scribes and pharisees, and people of Israel, had a particular effect on the Jewish nation, as by this, the topstone and worst of all their crimes, was filled up the mea-

sure of their iniquities, and which put an end to that dispensation, together with its law and covenant. That as John's baptism summed up in one, all the previous water baptisms of that dispensation, and put an end to them, which he sealed with his blood, so this sacrifice of the body of Jesus Christ, summed up in one all the outward atoning sacrifices of the shadowy dispensation, and put an end to them all, thereby abolishing the law, having previously fulfilled all its righteousness, and, as saith the apostle, "He blotted out the hand-writing of ordinances, nailing them to his cross;" having put an end to the law that commanded them, with all its legal sins, and abolished all its legal penalties, so that all the Israelites that believed on him, after he exclaimed on the cross "It is finished," might abstain from all the rituals of their law, such as circumcision, water baptisms, outward sacrifices, seventh day sabbaths, and all their other holy days, &c. and be blameless; and the legal sins that any were guilty of, was now remitted and done away by the abolishment of the law that commanded them, for "where there is no law there is no transgression." But those that did not believe on him, many of them were destroyed by the sword, and the rest were scattered abroad in the earth. But, *I do not consider that the crucifixion of the outward body of flesh and blood of Jesus on the cross, was an atonement for any sins but the legal sins of the Jews; for as their law was outward, so their legal sins and their penalties were outward, and these could be atoned for by an outward sacrifice; and this last outward sacrifice was a full type of the inward sacrifice that every sinner must make, in giving up that sinful life of his own will, in and by which he hath from time*

to time, crucified the innocent life of God in his own soul; and which Paul calls "the old man with his deeds," or "the man of sin and son of perdition," who hath taken God's seat in the heart, and there exalteth itself above all that is called God, or is worshipped, sitting as Judge and Supreme. Now all this life, power, and will of man, must be slain and die on the cross spiritually, as Jesus died on the cross outwardly, and this is the true atonement, which that outward atonement was a clear and full type of. This the apostle Paul sets forth in a plain manner, Romans vi. 3 & 4. "Know ye not that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ, were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death, that, like as Christ was raised up from the dead (outwardly), by the glory of the Father, even so we," having by the spiritual baptism witnessed a death to sin, shall know a being raised up spiritually and walk in newness of life.

But the primitive Christian church having soon after the apostles' days, turned away from their true and only sufficient guide, the Spirit of Truth, that Jesus commanded his disciples to wait for, and not attempt to do any thing until they had received it, but assured them that when they had received it, it would be a complete and sufficient rule, *without the addition of any other thing*, as it would lead them and guide them in all truth. And to its sufficiency, John, the beloved apostle, bore this noble and exalted testimony, in full accordance with his Divine Master, in this emphatic language to his fellow believers: "Ye have an unction from the Holy One, and need not that any man teach you, but as the same anointing teacheth you, which is truth, and is no lie." But the belie-

vers, by too much looking to their old traditions, soon lost sight of or neglected fully to attend, as they ought to have done, to their inward guide, turned their attention outward to the *letter*, which *always killeth those who lean upon it as a rule*. Hence, the successors of those meek and self-denying followers of the example and commands of Jesus, apostatised from the simplicity of the Gospel, by which the unity was broken, and they soon became divided into sects and parties, and persecuted each other; and invented and promulgated inconsistent and unsound doctrines, such as original sin, certifying that all Adam's offspring was condemned to eternal punishment for one mis-step of our first parents; for they don't appear to have been guilty of but one failure, and that it appears they made satisfaction for at the time of their first arraignment by their benevolent creator, manifesting sorrow and repentance: which seems to be fairly implied by the sequel of the interview between them; for it is said he clothed them with coats of skin, to hide their nakedness, which is an emblem of durable clothing, *and as their nakedness was not an outward one*, but a nakedness of soul, not being able to conceal their sin from the All-penetrating Eye of Divine Justice, so when he had brought them, through conviction, to see their error and to repent of it, he was reconciled to them, and clothed them again with his Holy Spirit.

And inasmuch as those idle promulgators of original sin, believe they are made sinners without their consent or knowledge, which, according to the nature and reason of things, every rational mind must see is impossible; so likewise they are idle and ignorant enough to believe they are made righteous without

their consent or knowledge, by the righteousness of one who lived on the earth near two thousand years before they had an existence, and this by the cruel hands of wicked men slaying an innocent and righteous one; and these are bold and daring enough to lay this cruel and unholy act in the charge of Divine Justice, as having purposely ordained it to be so: But what an outrage it is against every righteous law of God and man, as the Scriptures abundantly testify. See Exodus, c. 23, v. 7. "Keep thee far from a false matter, and the innocent and righteous slay thou not, for I will not justify the wicked." Deuteronomy, c. 27, v. 25. "Cursed be he that taketh reward to slay an innocent person;" and much might be produced to show the wickedness and absurdity of the doctrine, that would accuse the perfectly just, all-wise and merciful Jehovah, of so barbarous and cruel an act, as that of slaying his innocent and righteous Son, to atone for the sins and iniquities of the ungodly.

Surely, is it possible, that any rational being that has any right sense of justice or mercy, that would be willing to accept forgiveness of his sins on such terms!!! Would he not rather go forward and offer himself wholly up to suffer all the penalties due to his crimes, rather than the innocent should suffer? Nay—was he so hardy as to acknowledge a willingness to be saved through such a medium, would it not prove that he stood in direct opposition to every principle of justice and honesty, of mercy and love, and show himself to be a poor selfish creature, and unworthy of notice!!!

Having given thee a sketch of my views on the subject of thy queries, how far thou may consider

them correct, I must leave to thy judgment and consideration ; and may now recommend thee to shake off all traditional views that thou hast imbibed from external evidences, and turn thy mind to the light within, as thy only true teacher : wait patiently for its instruction, and it will teach thee more than men or books can do ; and lead thee to a clearer sight and sense of what thou desirest to know, than I have words clearly to convey it to thee in. That this may be thy experience, is my sincere desire ; and with love to thyself and family, I conclude,

Thy affectionate friend,

ELIAS HICKS.

DR. N. SHOEMAKER.



The reader has now before him the extract of the letter written by A. Braithwaite, attested by Ann Shipley, and another Friend who was present during a part of one of the conversations ; also the statement of Joseph Whitall, subsequently admitted by Elias Hicks ; likewise Elias Hicks' two letters, corroborating the former—by all which it must be evident, that the account of the conversation, as given by Anna Braithwaite, is established and confirmed in the most clear and positive manner, in all its particulars.

We are far from wishing to attribute to Elias Hicks, a single sentiment which he has not avowed—but when we read *his own letters*, and the statements thus given by several respectable persons, of what he has declared in their hearing, corroborated as they are by *other* documents, which we could pro-

duce, if necessary, we think the conclusion is certainly a fair one, that he does deny the propitiatory sacrifice of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, and considers his death to be of no more importance to us than the death of one of the martyrs—that he does away a belief in the proper divinity of the Redeemer, and makes him a *mere* man—that he greatly undervalues the blessing of the Holy Scriptures, speaks of them in language calculated to lessen our respect and regard for their authority, and totally discards them as a test of the soundness of doctrines.

In all which particulars he differs from the principles of the Society of Friends, as set forth in Barclay's Apology; a book which has always been acknowledged as their standard doctrinal work.

A REVIEW

OF

ELIAS HICKS' LETTER

TO

DR. NATHAN SHOEMAKER.

NOTE.—*The foregoing letter of Elias Hicks to Dr. Nathan Shoemaker, has been widely disseminated in manuscript, and represented by its admirers as containing some new and very rational and consistent views on the doctrine of the atonement, &c. It purports to be a deliberate reply to certain queries propounded for the author's consideration. The writer says, "he considers the whole subject to be a very simple one;" and as he had nearly two months to reflect upon it before writing his answer, we may fairly conclude that he has given us his sober and matured opinion on the points in question. How "simple" he has made the subject appear, by his manner of treating it in this letter, we shall endeavour to show in our remarks.*

REVIEW, &c.

WE suppose it will readily be admitted by all our readers, that the preceding letter exhibits the real sentiments of its author upon the several subjects of which it treats. His object in writing it, as stated in the exordium, appears to have been, to give “in a *very simple way*,” his “views of the suffering of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, and what was the object of the shedding of his blood on the cross, and what benefits resulted to mankind by the shedding of this blood.” We would request our readers to notice this particularly, as the letter contains so much irrelevant matter, that there is danger of losing sight of the *main subjects*.

As Elias Hicks appeals to the Holy Scriptures as the authority for his opinions, and professes to predicate his arguments upon them, we shall assume it as *granted* that their authority is *finally conclusive*. We view them as the only legitimate test of our respective sentiments, and to be consistent with *his own practice*, he must concur with us in such judgment. In the following pages, therefore, Scripture language must be the umpire between us.

That Jesus Christ “suffered by the hands of wicked men;” “that *his* works were righteous and *theirs* wicked,” are positions which we freely admit; but that his death was merely a consequence of this latter fact, or which is the same thing, that he was no more than a martyr to his principles, is to us not quite so

clear. It is an assertion which we do not find supported by Scripture testimony, and as it is calculated to destroy our faith in the vicarious nature of his sufferings, we think it unsafe to adopt it.

Our blessed Redeemer tells us himself, and there can be no *higher authority*, that he “came to give his life a ransom for many;” “that whosoever believeth on him should not perish, but have eternal life.”

Elias Hicks asks, “Did God send him into the world purposely to suffer death by the hands of wicked men?”

His object in putting the query in this form, as well as in making the Jews put Jesus to death, merely because his works were righteous and theirs were wicked, must, we think, be obvious to all. It is to destroy in the very outset, a belief in the atonement—to alarm us with the apparent absurdity of making wicked men agents in the plan of redemption—and to reduce the sufferings of the Son of God in the flesh, to a complete parallel with those of the martyrs. But Christ himself tells us that he *did come purposely* to suffer death, and *that death* was to be a ransom for many. Now, whether he suffered by wicked or by righteous men, it cannot alter the nature of his sufferings—they are still *redeeming*.

If we vary the query so as to read, Did God send him into the world purposely to lay down his life a ransom for sinners? (and we shall still preserve the plain meaning of E. H.’s query,) we are compelled to reply in the affirmative, or to deny the concurrent testimony of the Lord Jesus himself, and of prophets, evangelists, and apostles.

That it was a prominent part of the mission of the

Saviour, "to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself," and "to lay down his life for the sins of the whole world," is evident from the following passages of Scripture :

"Surely *he* hath borne *our* griefs and carried *our* sorrows, yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God and afflicted. *But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon him, and with his stripes we are healed.* All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and *the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.* He was oppressed and afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth; he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he opened not his mouth. He was taken from prison and from judgment, and who shall declare his generation, for he was cut off out of the land of the living; *for the transgression of my people was he stricken.* And he made his grave with the wicked and with the rich in his death, because he hath done no violence; neither was any deceit in his mouth: yet it pleased the Lord to bruise him, he hath put him to grief. When thou shalt make his soul [Hebrew word, *life,*] *an offering for sin,* he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand. He shall see the travail of his soul and shall be satisfied. By his knowlege (or, as a more correct rendering, "by the knowledge of him,") *shall my righteous servant justify many, for he shall bear their iniquities;* therefore will I divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong, because he hath poured out his soul unto death, and he was number-

ed among the transgressors; *and he bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors.*" Isaiah c. liii.

We have quoted the whole of this very remarkable prophecy, because it is so directly in point, that, was there not another text in the Bible to prove that the predetermined object of the Saviour's coming was to offer an atonement for sin, *this of itself* is amply sufficient to establish the fact, and is a most triumphant refutation of all the cavils that have ever been arrayed against the doctrine of the propitiation of Jesus Christ.

It asserts in the most positive manner that the sufferings of Christ were *not on his own account*, for he hath done no violence, neither was any deceit in his mouth: that they were *for the sins of others*; he was wounded for *our* transgressions, and bruised for *our* iniquities, for the transgression of *my people* was he stricken: that on his part they were *perfectly voluntary*; he poured out his soul [life] unto death; he bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors: that they were *well pleasing to the Father, and consistent with his will*, for the Lord hath laid upon him the iniquity of us all. It *pleased the Lord* to bruise him and to put him to grief; therefore will I divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong, because he hath poured out his soul [life] unto death.

With these assertions, the testimony of Christ and his apostles fully accords, as will be seen by the following texts: "Even as the Son of Man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and *to give his life a ransom for many.*" Matt. c. xx. v. 28. "Think-est thou that I cannot now pray to my Father, and

he shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels? But how then shall the Scriptures be *fulfilled that thus it must be.*" c. 26. "But all this was done, *that the Scriptures of the prophets might be fulfilled.*" Matt. c. xxi., v. 4.

As expressions similar to these occur frequently in the narratives of the evangelists, we may remark, that they positively assert certain things to be done, in order that the purposes of the Almighty, as predicted by his inspired prophets, might be duly accomplished; and the things asserted thus to be done, relate not only to the birth and life, *but to the minute particulars of the sufferings and death of the Lord Jesus.*

To return to our quotations—"Oh fools and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken—*ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory,*" Luke, c. xxiv. v. 25, 26. "These are *the words which I spake* unto you while I was yet with you, *that all things must be fulfilled* which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the Psalms, concerning me." v. 44. "And he said unto them, *thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer and to rise from the dead the third day, and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name, among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.*" v. 46. "And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, *even so must the son of man be lifted up, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life.* John, c. iii. v. 14. *I lay down my life for the sheep; therefore doth my Father love me because I lay down my life, that I might take it again. No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself—I have power*

to lay it down, and I have power to take it again, *this commandment have I received of my Father.*" c. x. v. 15, 17, 18. Jesus saith to Pilate, "thou couldst have no power at all against me, *except it were given thee from above.*" c. xix. v. 11. "Ye men of Israel hear these words, Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you, by miracles and wonders and signs, which God did by him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know—*HIM being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God,* ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain. Acts, c. ii. v. 22, 23. *But those things which God before had shewed, by the mouth of all his prophets that Christ should suffer, HE hath so fulfilled.*" c. iii. v. 18. "For of a truth against thy *Holy Child Jesus*, whom thou hast anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and the people of Israel, were gathered together, *for to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done.*" c. iv. v. 27.

We have quoted but a small part of the abundant testimony which might be adduced from the sacred volume, relative to this interesting subject; and we would ask any of our readers, whether they can reconcile this language of Scripture with the assertion of Elias Hicks, where he argues, that God did by no means send his son into the world purposely to suffer death, but only to live a righteous and godly life, and thereby be a perfect example. If we believe the truth of the Bible, must we not be directly at issue with his sentiments on these points?

The *coming*, and *sufferings*, and *death*, of the Son of God in the flesh, were events, over which mere human power could have no control—*He took upon*

himself flesh, and in due time, *laid down his own life*, expressly declaring “*No man taketh it from me, I lay it down of myself.*” The Scriptures say, he was *delivered up* to the Jews by the *determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God*, and that whatsoever they did against him, *the Divine hand and counsel, before determined to be done.* Now E. H. says, that it was not the purpose and will of God, that he should be put to death by the Jews, but merely, that he should set us a good example, by living a righteous and godly life—Which account are we to believe ?

But, says E. H. “if it was the purpose and will of God, that he should die by the hands of wicked men, then the Jews by crucifying of him, would have done God’s will, and of course, would all have stood justified in his sight, which could not be.”

We say this mode of reasoning is inadmissible, and if E. H. carries it throughout, he must, in numerous instances, impute the greatest injustice and cruelty to his “benevolent creator.” We shall only notice the case of Pharaoh, as one of many.

The Lord sent Moses and Aaron unto him saying, “Go in, speak unto Pharaoh king of Egypt, that he let the children of Israel go out of his land.”—But saith he also, “And I will harden Pharaoh’s heart, and multiply my signs and my wonders in the land of Egypt; but Pharaoh shall not hearken unto you, that I may lay my hand upon Egypt, and bring forth mine armies, and my people, the children of Israel, out of the land of Egypt, by great judgments.” He not only hardened his heart, that he should not let the people go, but he further says, “And indeed for this very cause, have I raised thee up, for to shew in

thee my power, that my name may be declared throughout all the earth.”

Now to apply the reasoning of E. H. to this case. We will form an argument in his own way ; viz : If it was the purpose and will of God to harden Pharaoh’s heart, that he should not let the people of Israel go, then Pharaoh, by refusing to hearken unto the voice of Moses, and keeping them in bondage, would have done God’s will, and of course would have stood justified in his sight ; and hence all the punishments inflicted by the Almighty upon Pharaoh, in consequence of his refusal to let the children of Israel go, were cruel and unjust.

The argument in this case, is exactly parallel to that instituted by E. H. to prove that it was not the purpose and will of God, that Christ should suffer death for mankind ; and if we admit his reasoning to be sound, we must convict the Almighty of injustice and wanton cruelty, in punishing Pharaoh, or else deny the Scripture account altogether.

The ways of God are above our ways, and beyond the ken of our puny powers, and it becomes us rather to believe and adore, than to be pronouncing dogmatically what must, or must not, result from the fulfilment of his eternal purposes. The Omnipotent Ruler of the universe, “ declareth the end from the beginning,” and “ ordereth all things after the counsel of his own will.”

There is no position more universally admitted, than that He is the great First Cause, “ by whom all things consist ;” and yet those who believe this, are far from supposing that He is the author of moral evil, though they well know that it abounds in the world. How far he *ordains*, and how far he *permits*,

in the great plan of the moral government of man, is not for us to decide, any further than it is revealed to us in the Holy Scriptures: and although these declare that God hardened Pharaoh's heart, that he should not obey the command, yet, it would be impious to conclude, that God is thereby implicated in the sin.

The Jews, too, were completely *free agents* in the business. They were wicked and hardy enough, *voluntarily* to become the actors in putting to death the Lamb of God—not because they were disposed to fulfil the “determinate counsel of God;” but for the very contrary reason, because they were “of their father the devil, who was a murderer from the beginning.” And shall finite man presume to say, that because the Divine Being overruled their actions, and brought good out of evil, that he was an accomplice in their guilt, or that their wickedness was diminished?—No, *their intentions* were as diabolical as those of any murderer could be, and for *these* they stood deeply and justly convicted in the sight of Heaven, and for *these* they were punished.

The reasoning of E. H., which we last quoted, is therefore wholly inadmissible, and contradicts the testimony of the Scriptures.

He tells us in the preceding sentence, what Christ came into the world for, viz: “To live a righteous and godly life, (which was the design and end of God's creating man in the beginning) and thereby be a perfect example to such of mankind as should come to the knowledge of him and of his perfect life.”

The assertions in this sentence amount to this: 1st. That Christ came only to live a righteous and godly life, and to be a perfect example; 2d. That

the benefits of his coming were limited to such as should come to the knowledge of his perfect example ; 3d. That the design of the Almighty in creating man in the beginning, was to live a righteous and godly life, and thereby to be a perfect example—Ergo, the design and end of God's sending Jesus Christ into the world was the same, precisely, as his design and end in creating Adam. Therefore, according to the assertions of E. H., the design and end of God's sending his Son in the flesh, was for no higher, or more important purpose, than the birth of the very meanest of the human species ; for it must be evident, that it is the design and end of God, in sending *all of us* into this world, that we should live a righteous and godly life, and thereby be good examples, and glorify our Creator.

Hence all those mighty preparations, which for hundreds of years had been making, to open the way for the advent of the Messiah ; which began immediately after the fall of Adam, and were continued through the patriarchal and Mosaic dispensations ; and all those sublime predictions which are contained in the books of the prophets, setting forth the glory and majesty of the Redeemer's kingdom, terminated in an event, no more important or beneficial to mankind, than the birth of any *mortal, peccable being*. Is this consistent with the Scriptures ?

Do not these assertions of Elias Hicks strip our blessed Lord of his eternal Divinity and Godhead and level him with mere man ?—And does not his scheme cut us off from all hope in the atonement, take away the great and glorious objects for which Christ came and suffered in the flesh, and sweep

from the sacred page the most precious and consoling doctrines of the gospel ?

We are confirmed in these views by the manner in which he speaks of his death, which he says, “ was permitted to be, as it had been with many of the prophets, and wise and good men that were before him, who suffered death by the hands of wicked men for righteousness sake, as ensamples to those that came after, that they should account nothing too dear to give up for the truth’s sake, not even their own lives.”

Here, he associates the Son of God with “ prophets, and wise and good men that were before him,” as being his equals.—He makes his death exactly similar to theirs, which is to say, that Christ was *a mere martyr*. Is this the language of the Bible ?

Elias Hicks does not use one solitary sentence, throughout the whole letter, which would characterize our blessed Lord as the propitiation, the Saviour, the Mediator or Intercessor for a guilty world, although he writes the letter for the *very purpose* of giving his “ views of the sufferings of the Son of God, and what was the object of the shedding of his blood on the cross, and what benefits resulted to mankind by the shedding of his blood ! !”

But although he has just assured us that Jesus Christ was sent into the world for the same purpose for which Adam was created, and that his death was a parallel with that of “ the prophets, and wise and good men that were before him,” yet in the next sentence he says “ But the shedding of his blood by the wicked scribes and pharisees and people of Israel, had a particular effect on the Jewish nation, as by this, *the topstone and worst of all their crimes*, was filled up the measure of their iniquities, and which put an

end to that dispensation, together with its law and covenant.”

Now we would ask, why did it happen that the death of Jesus Christ produced this particular effect upon the Jewish nation, rather than the death of either of those “prophets, and wise and good men that were before him;” who, according to the reasoning of E. H. were created for the same purpose, and died for the same causes, as did the Son of God? —As E. H. says that God did not send him into the world *purposely* to suffer death, it must have been a *mere chance* that his death put an end to the law,—and as Isaiah, John the Baptist, James, Peter, and Paul, were all “wise and good men,” and died “by the hands of wicked men for righteousness sake,” we should like to know why E. H. will make the death of Jesus Christ to produce this important effect, in preference to one of these?

He proceeds—“that as John’s baptism summed up in one all the previous water baptisms of that dispensation and put an end to them, which he sealed with his blood, so *the sacrifice of the body of Jesus Christ* summed up in one all the outward atoning sacrifices of the shadowy dispensation, and put an end to them all, thereby abolishing the law,” &c. “so that all the Israelites that believed on him, after he exclaimed on the cross, It is finished, might abstain from all the rituals of their law, such as circumcision, water baptisms, outward sacrifices, seventh day sabbaths; and all their other holy days, and be blameless,” &c.

These surely are astonishing events to result from the death of one *who came only to do what every man is required to do*, and who merely died a martyr!

It appears, however, that Elias Hicks *does believe* that this “topstone and worst of all the crimes, committed by the scribes and pharisees and people of Israel, by which the measure of their iniquity was filled up;” that this diabolical and wicked act, was the means of abolishing the Jewish law and dispensation.—Now if it was the will of God that this law should be abolished, and “the sacrifice of the body of Jesus Christ” was the means of its abolishment, as E. H. asserts; then from his own reasoning, the Jews did the will of God, in crucifying Christ, fully as much, as on the supposition that he came to suffer death for the sins of mankind.

Let us state the argument in his own language—For if it was the purpose and will of God, that the sacrifice of the body of Jesus Christ should sum up in one all the outward atoning sacrifices of the shadowy dispensation, and put an end to them all, thereby abolishing the law; which put an end to that dispensation, together with its law and covenant; then the Jews by crucifying Jesus Christ would have done God’s will, and of course would all have stood justified in his sight.

But E. H. says all this *was done* by the sacrifice of the body of Jesus Christ. Therefore, according to his reasoning, the Jews did the will of God in committing this topstone and worst of all their crimes. We have here another specimen of his inconsistency; indeed the letter presents us with a tissue of them, on almost every page.

If, to extricate himself from this difficulty, he says that it was not the purpose and will of God thus to abolish the law, he should, to be consistent, observe all its rituals and ceremonies. And he *has* virtually

asserted this, for as he declares that Christ did not come “purposey to suffer death,” and that his death was the topstone and worst of all the crimes committed by the Jewish nation, and consequently very contrary to the purpose and will of God in sending him into the world, it follows from his mode of reasoning, that if this murderous deed abolished the law, it must have been done away contrary to the purpose and will of God—Ergo, the Law of Moses ought still to be in force.

Let any serious person read the account of the delivery of the law to the children of Israel, and the solemn injunctions which were laid upon them to observe all its rituals; and then say whether he thinks it probable that *an event* which was to annul that law and do it completely away, never came within the design and purposes and will of the Divine Law-giver?

Is it probable that a law, ratified and sealed by so many awful and impressive sanctions, could be abrogated by the mere *accidental death of a martyr*? We say accidental, because E. H. asserts that his death was no part of the divine purpose and will.

Our readers will perceive from the Scriptures that this law partook of the nature of a covenant made between two parties; and of course it could not be dissolved by the consent of one party only, and that by far the inferior.—Consequently if it be repealed, it must have been done with the *consent and will* of Him who gave it. Hence as it was repealed in the will and wisdom of God, and as E. H. asserts that the sacrifice of the body of Jesus Christ repealed it, he makes the Jews to have done the will of Heaven in putting him to death.

He proceeds to tell us, that “he does not consider that the crucifixion of the outward body of flesh and blood of Jesus on the cross, was an atonement for any sins, but the legal sins of the Jews; for as their law was outward, so their legal sins and their penalties were outward, and these could be atoned for by an outward sacrifice.”

We have always understood the word *sin* to mean moral evil—the violation of the law and commands of God; and we are utterly at a loss to know what “outward or legal sin” can mean. If God command his creature man to do any thing, however unimportant the thing itself may appear to him to be, the disobedience of that command is *positive sin*—it is moral evil. The thing itself abstractly considered, may be neither good nor evil; the crime is in transgressing the law of God, and this must always be *absolute sin*. If therefore, E. H. alludes to the neglect of the Jewish ritual, when he speaks of “legal or outward sin,” the case is not altered. The Jews were as positively commanded to observe all those rituals, as they were to fulfil the precepts of the Decalogue; and the neglect to do so, was an act of rebellion and disobedience to a positive command of God, and therefore was positive sin or moral evil.

Now E. H. distinctly admits in the sentence which we last quoted from his letter, that the *crucifixion* of the outward body of flesh and blood of Jesus on the cross, *was an atonement* for these *legal sins* of the Jews—that is, that the Jews were released from the curse or penalty, which they had incurred by transgressing their law, through the atoning sacrifice, or sufferings and death of Jesus Christ, whom he calls “an innocent and righteous one.”

In admitting, therefore, that the legal sins of the Jews could be, and were atoned for, by an outward sacrifice, and that this sacrifice was the death of Jesus Christ on the cross, E. Hicks has fully recognized and granted the *principle* of vicarious and propitiatory suffering and death of “an innocent and righteous one” on behalf, and in lieu of the guilty; and yet in the same letter, speaking of the *Christian’s* belief in this doctrine, he declares it to be “wicked and absurd”—“an outrage against every righteous law of God and man,” and asks whether any rational creature that has any right sense of justice and mercy, would be willing to accept forgiveness of his sins upon such terms?

Is this consistency? To admit the doctrine of atonement on one page, and anathematise it, and the believers in it, on the next? The distinction of “legal or outward sin,” makes nothing in his favour, for the *principle of atonement* is the same, even if we admit the distinction to be correct, which it evidently is not. If the sins of the Jews could be atoned for by an outward sacrifice, and “this too by the hands of wicked men, slaying an innocent and righteous one,” as E. H. asserts, upon the *same principle* the sins of Christians may be atoned for, by the same sacrifice. What are we to think then of his expressions in relation to those who believe in the *apostle’s* doctrine of the atonement, when he says, that any person acknowledging a willingness to be saved through *such a medium*, would shew himself to be a poor selfish creature, unworthy of notice?

He *admits* the doctrine in behalf of the Jews, why then be so severe upon those who claim it for *Christians*?

He proceeds in his letter—"And this last outward sacrifice was a full type of the inward sacrifice, that every sinner must make, in giving up that sinful life of his own will, in and by which, he hath from time to time crucified the innocent life of God in his own soul"—"Now all this life, power, and will of man, must be slain and die on the cross spiritually, as Jesus died on the cross outwardly, and this is the *true atonement*, which that outward atonement was a clear and full type of."

This mystical language of "giving up that sinful life, and its being slain and dying on the cross," &c. means simply that a wicked man should forsake his wickedness and learn to do well; and the sentiment is fairly inculcated, that a man may *thus make atonement for his own sins*: that he may go on for years sinning against God, then turn about and become religious, and claim the *forgiveness of his past sins* as due to his *present righteousness*. On the same principle, *past righteousness* could atone for *present sin*; all which any one may see is entirely contrary to the plainest doctrines of the Gospel.

The natural depravity of man, his utter helplessness, and his inability to extricate himself from the wretched situation into which sin has plunged him; the necessity of a propitiation and a mediator, are fully set forth in the sacred volume.

Our blessed Lord told his disciples, that after they had done *all* that was commanded them, they should say "we are unprofitable servants, we have done no more than it was our duty to do." Now, we are commanded to keep the whole law of God all our lives long, and it is our *duty* to obey the command. If a man go on in rebellion against this law for a se-

ries of years, and is then through the goodness of God, awakened to a sense of his sinful state, and begins to amend his ways—or as Elias Hicks expresses it, “gives up that sinful life of his own will to die on the cross,” can this amendment of life be any atonement for his past wickedness, when, if he had faithfully kept the *whole* law of God *all his life long*, he would have been but *an unprofitable servant*, and have done *no more than it was his duty to do?*

This doctrine of self-atonement, though inculcated by E. H., is no where mentioned in the Scriptures, nor supported by them.

Speaking of the sin of our first parents, he says, “They don’t appear to have been guilty of but one *failure*, and that it appears they made satisfaction for, at the time of their first arraignment by their benevolent Creator, manifesting sorrow and repentance.”

That the transgression of Adam and Eve, merited a more forcible appellation than “a failure or a misstep,” is very obvious from the punishment which followed it. Now, to examine the assertions of E. H.: first, that “it appears they made satisfaction for this failure at the time of their first arraignment.”

This is not only unsupported by Scripture, but inconsistent with it. If they made satisfaction for the crime, they must have done away the guilt and penalty; and it would have been highly unjust in their benevolent Creator to punish them for “a failure,” which they had made satisfaction for. But the Bible tells us that he did *punish* them, [see Genesis,] consequently, they could not have made satisfaction for the sin.

Further, he says “they manifested sorrow and re-

pentance.” This is equally at variance with the Bible. It tells us that they began making excuses, and trying to shift the blame upon some one else. The woman says, “the serpent beguiled me, and I did eat;” and Adam, as though he would impute a part of the blame to his Maker, says, “the woman whom *thou gavest me to be with me*, she gave me of the tree and I did eat.”

We are unable to find any tokens of sorrow or repentance in any part of the Scripture narrative. Adam and Eve seem to have no idea themselves of having made satisfaction, or they would not have attempted to hide themselves from the presence of their benevolent Creator. Adam says, “I heard thy voice in the garden, and *I was afraid.*” Where would have been the occasion for this slavish fear, if they had made satisfaction for the crime, and manifested sorrow and repentance?

The next sentence is predicated upon no better authority, viz. “Which (viz. their making satisfaction, &c.) seems to be fairly implied by the sequel of the interview between them, for it is said he clothed them with coats of skin to hide their nakedness, which is an emblem of durable clothing,” &c.

Clothing them with coats of skins, was certainly no evidence of their having made satisfaction; because, while in a state of innocence and purity, *before* they sinned, they were naked and needed no clothing. The *necessity for clothing* was the effect of their sin; and the wearing of it must have been a constant and painful memento of their fall from their primeval state of happiness. The Hebrew word signifies the “skins of beasts,” and we should rather think these indicative of the ascendancy which the animal passions had

obtained over them by their fall, than emblems of the pure and holy covering of the Lord's Spirit, which E. H. would make them to signify.

Again, says E. H., "their nakedness was *not an outward one*, but a nakedness of soul."

The Bible says, "*they were both naked, the man and his wife, and they were not ashamed.*" This proves beyond a doubt that their nakedness *was an outward nakedness*, else why say "they were not ashamed?" We would ask E. H., if it was not an outward nakedness, how could he clothe them with coats of skin? Could "a nakedness of soul," be removed by covering them with garments made from the skins of beasts?

He proceeds: "And inasmuch as those idle promulgators of original sin, believe they are made sinners without their consent or knowledge, which, according to the nature and reason of things, every rational mind must see is impossible, so likewise they are idle and ignorant enough to believe they are made righteous without their consent or knowledge, by the righteousness of one who lived on the earth near two thousand years before they had an existence; and this by the cruel hands of wicked men slaying an innocent and righteous one."

We would here request our readers particularly to notice, that the subject treated on in this part of the letter, (from the sentence which we have just quoted, to the concluding paragraph,) is *undeniably*, the Christian's belief in the doctrine of the propitiation of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. We should recollect too, that Elias Hicks has before granted the *principle of atonement*, by admitting that the crucifixion of the outward body of flesh and blood of Je-

sus on the cross, was an atonement for the legal sins of the Jews; and of consequence, he makes the Jews *righteous*, touching those points of the law wherein they had transgressed, (or their legal sins,) “by the righteousness of one who lived on the earth,” nearly fifteen hundred years after that law was given; “and this by the cruel hands of wicked men slaying an innocent and righteous one;” and he is therefore as much chargeable with being “idle and ignorant” in doing so, as those are who hold up the propitiation of Jesus Christ, for the belief of Christians. We do not, however, consider his statement to be correct, as we are not acquainted with any Christians who believe they are made righteous *without their consent or knowledge*, through the atoning blood of the Son of God.

While we reverently and gratefully acknowledge the blessed advantages purchased for mankind by his precious sufferings and death on the cross, we are far from believing that this alone, constitutes the whole work of the Christian’s salvation. We believe most sincerely, that his death was the procuring cause of the more full and general diffusion of the Holy Spirit, which constitutes the glory of these gospel days; and that obedience to the influences of this Spirit, are necessary for the work of sanctification. Yet we can no more separate the outpouring of the Holy Ghost, and the mediation and intercession of our adorable Redeemer, from that most acceptable sacrifice which he made of himself for the sins of the whole world, than we can assert, that this sacrifice of itself, justifies the sinner while he continues in his sins. The outward offering and the inward work are necessarily and inseparably connected, as cause and ef-

fect, and are both essential and indispensable to man's salvation.

We have already cited many texts of Scripture, which assert that our blessed Lord and his apostles taught the very doctrine which Elias Hicks stiles *us* "idle and ignorant" for believing; and the only defence which we shall make on the occasion, is simply to ask the question, Who is most likely to be right, Jesus Christ and his apostles, or Elias Hicks?

The following language of Paul, "who was not a whit behind the very chiefest of the apostles," comes directly to the point mentioned in the last quotation from the letter: "And, therefore, it was imputed to him for righteousness. Now, it was not written for his sake alone, that it was imputed to him, but *for us also, to whom it shall be imputed, if we believe on him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead, who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification.*" Rom. c. iv., v. 22, 23, 24, 25. "Therefore, as by the offence of one, judgment came upon all men to condemnation, *even so by the righteousness of one, the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life; for as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous.*" Rom. c. v., v. 18.

Again, E. H. says, "And these, (viz. those who believe that the atonement was made for the sins of the whole world,) are bold and daring enough to lay this cruel and unholy act in the charge of divine justice, as having purposely ordained it to be so; but what an outrage it is against every righteous law of God and man, as the Scriptures abundantly testify," &c.

On this passage we have only to remark, that we have proved before, that E. H. by making this "cruel and unholy act," the means of abolishing the law and atoning for the sins of the Jews, has "laid it in the charge of divine justice," fully as much as though he believed with the apostle John, that Jesus Christ was "the propitiation, not for our (the Jew's) sins *only*, but for the sins of *the whole world*."

It is a little remarkable, that, from *his abundant* testimony in the Scriptures, he could not have produced some passages more relevant and forcible than those he has selected. They make directly against him: for, although the Jews committed this "cruel and unholy act," yet he grants that it was an atonement for *their legal sins*, which seems much like *giving* them a reward for slaying the innocent.

"And much," he says, "might be produced to show the wickedness and absurdity of the doctrine, that would accuse the perfectly just, all wise, and merciful Jehovah, of so barbarous and cruel an act, as that of slaying his innocent and righteous Son, to atone for the sins and iniquities of the ungodly."

"The doctrine," to which E. H. attaches this wickedness and absurdity, is evidently that of the atonement of Jesus Christ. We are not aware, however, that "the doctrine," or any of its believers, bring this gross accusation against the Supreme Being. His letter makes this "barbarous act," the appointed means of abolishing the law, and of atoning for the sins of the Jews, who committed it; and hence he would seem, from his own reasoning, quite as fully to make the accusation, as those to whom he wishes to impute it.

We really regret that he cannot refer to the doc-

trine in question, without branding it with epithets, which must be painful to all pious Christians. Throughout the whole letter, the subject is not once alluded to, without an attempt, lamentably obvious, to present it in a forbidding, or even disgusting form. A calm and temperate assertion of his own belief, might be well ; but with this he does not seem to be contented. Christian charity would, we should suppose, induce him to respect the feelings of those who *sincerely* believe, with the Scriptures, that it is the only medium of reconciliation which God hath appointed.

“ Surely,” he says, “ is it possible, that any rational being that has any right sense of justice or mercy, that would be willing to *ACCEPT* forgiveness of his sins on such terms.”

The words “ such terms,” evidently mean the vicarious sufferings of Jesus Christ—Once more then to the Bible. Does it not tell us in the plainest language that can possibly be used, that this propitiation is the medium of redemption—that *these are the terms* upon which forgiveness of sin is offered?

Paul says to the Romans, “ Whom God hath set forth to be a *propitiation through faith in his blood*, to declare his righteousness for the *remission of sins that are past*, through the forbearance of God ; to declare, I say, at this time his righteousness, that he might be just, and the justifier of him which *believeth in Jesus.*” To the Corinthians, “ For he hath made him to be *sin* (or as in the Greek, a sin offering) *for us*, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.” To the Galatians, “ Who *gave himself for our sins*, that he might deliver us from this present evil world, according to the will of

God and our Father." To the Ephesians, "Be ye kind to one another, tender hearted, forgiving one another, *even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you.*"—"To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us *accepted in the beloved, in whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace.*" To the Colossians, "And you that were sometime alienated, and enemies in your minds, by wicked works, *yet now hath he reconciled in the body of his flesh through death; to present you holy and unblameable, and unreprieveable in his sight.*" To Timothy, "For there is one God, *and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, who gave himself a Ransom for all, to be testified in due time.*"

To Titus, "Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of our great God and Saviour Jesus Christ, *who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.*" Hebrews, "By the which will we are sanctified, *through the offering of the Body of Jesus Christ once for all*"—"for by *one offering* he hath *perfected* for ever them that are sanctified." Peter, "Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not *redeemed* with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers, *but by the precious blood of Christ as of a Lamb without blemish and without spot.*" "Who, his ownself bare our sins *in his own body on the tree, that we being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness, by whose stripes ye were healed.*" "For Christ also, hath once suffered for sins, *the just for the unjust, that he might bring us*

to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit.”

Now after reading these, and many other portions of Scripture, which we could produce if necessary, can any one doubt that God does offer us forgiveness of sins upon “*such terms*,” (as E. H. call the propitiation of our Redeemer), and upon none other; yet he queries, whether “any rational being that has any right sense of justice or mercy, would be willing to *accept it*.”

But E. H. by using the word ACCEPT, must necessarily suppose that “such terms” might be offered—for how could a man *accept* what was not tendered to him?—And yet, although it is *God who offers*, man the sinner may refuse to accept them. And why not *accept* them? Because he says “such terms are wicked and absurd, and an outrage against every righteous law of God and man.”

Does he suppose then, that the Holy, Wise, and Just God, has offered, or could offer to us, the forgiveness of sins upon such terms, that if man has any right sense of justice or mercy, he would not accept them? How destitute then of any right sense of justice and mercy, does the reasoning of this letter make Him to be, who, as the Bible declares, *does offer to our acceptance* “such terms.”

Elias Hicks, as we have before stated, asserts that upon “such terms” forgiveness of sins was offered to the Jews; that is, “by the hands of wicked men slaying an innocent and righteous one.” Now we should like to know, whether he considers those Jews who *accepted* “such terms,” to have been destitute “of any right sense of justice or mercy;” to have been “standing in direct opposition to every princi-

ple of justice and honesty, of mercy and love, and to have been poor, selfish creatures, unworthy of notice." It would follow from his reasoning on this subject, that those Jews who utterly rejected the atonement which E. H. says, expiated their sins, and persecuted Jesus Christ unto death, were the most just and honest among their nation, and the least selfish in their views.

Again: says E. H. "Would he not rather go forward, and offer himself wholly up to suffer all the penalties due to his crimes, rather than the innocent should suffer?"

As regards the sufferings of Jesus Christ, they were *entirely voluntary*, as the Scriptures abundantly shew; consequently the latter clause of this sentence loses all its force. He *freely and of his own will*, gave himself a *ransom* for us—a sacrifice well pleasing unto God.

What now is the penalty, or "all the penalties, due to man's crimes?" Let the Bible answer—"Tribulation and anguish upon every soul of man that doeth evil"—"Everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and the glory of his power"—"To be cast into hell"—"Suffering the vengeance of eternal fire"—"Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched"—"To be cast into the lake that burneth with fire and brimstone"—"The smoke of whose torment ascendeth for ever and ever."

Is it not, then, a plain inference from the language of this letter, "that any rational being that has any right sense of justice and mercy, would rather go forward, and offer his soul up to suffer all these penalties," rather than *accept the forgiveness of sins through the propitiatory sacrifice of Jesus Christ?*

And yet the Scriptures, as we have before shown, fully assert that these are the terms upon which that forgiveness is offered.

“Nay,” says E. H. “was he so hardy as to acknowledge a willingness *to be saved through such a medium*, would it not prove that he stood in direct opposition, to every principle of justice and honesty, of mercy and love, and show himself to be a poor selfish creature, and unworthy of notice?”

Here, the words “*such a medium*,” refer to the atonement, as must be evident from the context. What, then, saith this sentence? Was any rational being so hardy as to acknowledge a willingness to be saved through *that medium*, which the Scriptures declare to be the *only* medium of salvation that God hath appointed, viz. the coming, sufferings, and death of the Son of God, as a sacrifice for sin; would it not prove *that rational being* to be standing in direct opposition to every principle of justice and honesty, of mercy and love, and show him to be a poor selfish creature, and unworthy of notice?

Now, if man would thus debase and degrade himself by *accepting*, or by merely acknowledging a *willingness* to be saved through the offered medium; what must HE be who could ordain and appoint that medium? We tremble when we reflect upon the inferences which result from the reasoning contained in this letter. Does it not make the Pure and Infinite Jehovah, the Judge of the spirits of all flesh, to be standing in direct opposition to every principle of justice and honesty, of mercy and love, and to be a poor selfish creature, and unworthy of notice!!

Let the reader contrast the sentiments avowed in

this letter, with the views and the feelings of a *truly awakened* and penitent sinner.

Humbled in the dust under an agonizing sense of the amazing weight of his sins, and the just punishment which they merit ; conscious of his utter inability to extricate himself from this dreadful situation, into which his iniquities have plunged him ; the repenting sinner casts about him a look of anxious inquiry, and exclaims in the anguish of remorse, “ Oh wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death ? ”

Conscious of his utter unworthiness and nothingness in the Divine sight, he “ dare not so much as lift his eyes to heaven,” but “ smiting upon his breast,” cries out “ God be merciful to me a sinner.” Fully aware that his multiplied crimes have brought upon him all the penalties of the violated law, and that the just sentence of everlasting condemnation is upon him, he can most truly and sincerely adopt the language, “ A Saviour or I die, a *Redeemer* or I perish for ever.”

Would such a man, think ye, talk of *not accepting* the forgiveness of his sins, on the terms of the propitiation of Jesus Christ? Would he consider the doctrine of the atonement, as wicked and absurd ; as an outrage against every righteous law of God and man? Would he rather go forward and offer himself wholly up to suffer all the pangs and woes and torments, which he *feels* to be due to his crimes, rather than be saved through that medium which the Bible declares, God has offered him ?

Far, very far from this. With what humble and reverent gratitude and joy would such a suppliant sinner listen to the gladdening assurances of the gos-

pel of Christ, "That when we were yet without strength, in due time, *Christ died for the ungodly*"—that God commendeth his love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us; "that being justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him;" "for if when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life."

How fully, how emphatically, would these gracious declarations, prove "glad tidings of great joy," to such a sinner as we have described, and how different would every feeling and sentiment of his soul be, from the language of this letter.

The author of this letter appears to deny the divinity and Godhead of Jesus Christ, and to consider him a mere man. He rejects the Christian doctrine of the atonement in the most decided and positive language.—His scheme seems to cut us off from all hope of mercy through this means, and to make man the *redeemer** of himself.

Well may we adopt the language of an inspired writer "Can a man be profitable unto God, as he that is wise may be profitable unto himself? Is it any pleasure to the Almighty that thou art righteous, or is it any gain to him that thou makest thy ways perfect? What hast thou that thou didst not receive? Now if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory as if thou hadst not received it?"

Instead of claiming the forgiveness of sins and the blessedness of heaven on the ground of personal wor-

* The word Redeemer is here used in its strictest sense. *Redimo*, its Latin root, signifies to buy back—to rescue by paying a price.

thiness, it would be acting more in character, for a sinful wretch to cry out, "Behold I am vile, what shall I answer thee? I will lay my hand upon my mouth—Once have I spoken, but I will not answer, yea twice, but I will proceed no further. Enter not into judgment with thy servant, Oh! Lord, for in thy sight shall no man living be justified."

The author of the document which we have been examining, commences his observations with saying, that "all truth is simple when we free ourselves from the improper *bias of tradition and education*;" and concludes them, by recommending us to "shake off *all traditional views* imbibed from *external evidences*," a term which he frequently uses to designate the Holy Scriptures.

It appears from these expressions, as well as from the general tenor of the letter, that it is a necessary preliminary to becoming converts to Elias Hicks' doctrine, that we should divest our minds of all regard to, or belief in, those plain and positive truths which we have been taught to revere from our childhood; which holy men of all ages and of different countries, since the Christian era, have held most sacred—*Truths*, which the Scriptures assert in the most solemn and impressive manner, and in support of which, thousands of pious Christians have suffered martyrdom. And truly *we* think, that before any person of sane mind, could adopt the sentiments which this letter contains, he must shake off, not only "all traditional views," but also a due reverence for sacred things, as well as all common sense and consistency, and totally discard his belief in the sacred volume.



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